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## THE FAITH OF AL-ISLĀM.

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In the following pages an attempt is made to give some idea of orthodox Muslim theology by translating and annotating an original tractate.<sup>1</sup> We have had many books and articles upon this subject, but our first-hand knowledge is still slight, and such a document as is given here,—which may be compared to the Westminster Confession or, perhaps, better, to the Westminster Shorter Catechism,—brings us face to face with the ideas and mental attitude of the Muslim theologian to a degree that can be attained through no statement that has been worked over by Western minds and has thus, of necessity, received a more or less marked Western imprint. Creeds and all statements of religious belief must be taken at their best, and that is as they are in themselves.

The full name of the author of this little treatise was Najm ad-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Muḥammad ‘Alī ibn Luqmān, an-Nasafī as-Samarqandī al-Ḥanafī. *Najm ad-Dīn* is a title of honor given to him by his contemporaries and means “Star of the Faith”; *Abū Ḥafṣ* implies that he had a son named *Ḥafṣ*, and would be the name used by familiar friends; *‘Umar* was his own proper name given in infancy, and the names that follow, joined by *ibn*, “son,” trace his genealogy. *An-Nasafī* means that he was a native of the town *Nasaf*, now *Karshī*, in the Khānate of Bukhārā, about eighty miles south-west of Samarqand, to which place he must have migrated at

<sup>1</sup> The Arabic text was published by Cureton in his *Pillar of the Creed of the Sunnites*, London, 1843, but as given there, is disfigured by many corruptions. I have been materially assisted in my translation by one of the copies in the Hartford Seminary Library, which has on the margin the collation of another MS. What MS. this is I am unable to tell, but it is distinctly superior to that from which Cureton printed. This collated copy came, I believe, from August Müller's library but the collation does not seem to be in his hand. As my translation is thus sometimes based on these various readings and sometimes on conjecture, I would beg any stray Arabist who may consult it not to blame me if it does not always agree with Cureton's printed text. I have made no attempt to indicate where I have diverged.

some time and thus gained the addition *as-Samarqandī*, "the man of Samarqand." Finally, *al-Ḥanafī* means that he was an adherent of the school of Muslim law founded by Abū Ḥanīfa, the greatest jurist of *al-Islām* and the broadest minded, most tolerant and liberal of the four great Imāms or leaders in theology and law.

The facts that have come down to us of the life of Abū Ḥafṣ, to adopt his more familiar name, are few. He was born A. H. 461 (A. D. 1068) and died A. H. 537 (December 4, A. D. 1142). His biographers unite in praising his literary fertility and many-sidedness, but do not rate very highly his accuracy in questions of fact. He wrote about one hundred works, including a great Qur'ān commentary, a history of the learned men of Samarqand, a book of legal lexicography, and works in biography, the science of tradition, law, and theology. He was a poet, too, or passed for one, but the fates have had their revenge, and even as he versified a collection of traditions by a predecessor, so several have turned the theological tract which I propose to translate, into lamentable verses. In Ḥajjī Khalifa's great encyclopædia of Arabic literature his name occurs at least thirty-nine times.

But of all his works, this little tract has certainly been the most popular. It is used to this day in the schools of Turkey and there have been written upon it most numerous commentaries and glosses. Ahlwardt in his "Catalogue of the Arabic MSS. in the Royal Library of Berlin" reckons up eight full commentaries, eighteen glosses, and four versifications, besides glosses upon those commentaries and, again, glosses upon those glosses. I believe, therefore, I am justified in taking it as a fair representative of the orthodox doctrine of *al-Islām* as it finally crystallized after four or five centuries of conflict. From the time of Abū Ḥafṣ to the present day there has been no change.

But though we know no events of his life, yet it will be of interest, and in fact necessary, for us to trace out to some extent the history and circumstances of his time. Only thus shall we be able to understand his attitude towards the great question of the Khalifate and the Imāmsnip. His life came in a time when dynasties rose and fell in the course of half a century and any soldier of fortune might hope to hew out a throne and, perhaps, to leave it to

his son. The golden age of the unity of *al-Islām* was long passed. The realm once ruled by the Commander of the Faithful had broken up into many separate states which kept changing and melting one into the other—a despair to the historian, and an anti-Khalīfa had long held Egypt, claiming in virtue of the blood of Muḥammad to be the true Pontiff of *al-Islām*. It was the time of the brief glories of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem and Saladin had not yet arisen to win back the Holy City. In the farther East the empire of Mahmūd of Ghazna had shriveled up before the Seljuks, whose empire, in its turn, was to break into separate states when the master-minds that had founded it were gone. The third and last of these, Mālik Shāh (reigned A.H. 465–85, A.D. 1072–92) extended the Seljuk boundary beyond the Oxus, taking in Bukhārā and Samarqand, and gave twenty years of peace for science, theology, and literature. His name is connected, for us, with that of Nizām al-Mulk, the scholar-statesman and real prop of his throne, and ‘Umar Khayyām, the poet-astronomer, who reformed for him the calendar, and who, of all his countrymen, has come nearest to the feeling and the heart of our time. A fellow-student of theirs, in old days at Naysābūr, was Ḥasan ibn Sabbāḥ who, as the Old Man of the Mountain, was to be a name of terror in the crusades, add a word to the languages of Europe, and leave a sect that lingers to the present day. Such was the atmosphere in which Abū Ḥafṣ must have reached his twenty-fifth year—a time of rare peace amid the thunderstorms. When this brief breathing space had passed and the Seljuk empire had broken up, it was still possible for Sinjar, the son of Mālik Shāh, to draw together the extreme eastern provinces and hold his own. He reigned at Merv and in A. H. 495 (A. D. 1101) put a Seljuk governor over Samarqand. Thus Abū Ḥafṣ’ life must have passed tranquilly on, but not to the very end. In A. H. 536 (A. D. 1141) came the first Mongol wave; on Friday, September 5th, the decisive battle was fought, Sinjar defeated, and Transoxiana lost. It was one of the great battles of the world, for it told what fifty years later would come when Chingiz Khān and his sons swept across Asia and half Europe and left a mark that has not yet been effaced. Abū Ḥafṣ survived the ruin of his country some fifteen months.

During the reign of Mālik Shāh, the 'Abbasside Khalifa in Baghdād was a spiritual sovereign treated with deference as the successor of Muḥammad but possessing no real power. It is true that his rival in Egypt was not in better case. They could exchange anathemas but, unless the powers behind them chose, beyond anathemas they could not go. Later, when the Seljuk empire had broken up, the 'Abbasside Khalifa attained again the position of an independent temporal prince with territories and troops, such as they were, at his own command.

What the situation was may, perhaps, become more plain to us if we can imagine that the vast plans of Gregory VII. had been carried out and the Pope had become the temporal as well as the spiritual head of the Christian world. Such a situation would have been similar to that in the world of *al-Islām* at its earliest time, during some few years under the dynasty of the Umayyads, when the one temporal and spiritual sovereign ruled from Samarqand to Spain. Then we can imagine how the vast fabric of such an imperial system broke down by its own weight. Under conflicting claims of legitimacy an anti-Pope arose and the great schism began. Then the process of disintegration went on still further. Provinces rose in insurrection and dropped away from each. Kingdoms grew up and the sovereigns over them professed themselves to be the lieutenants of the supreme pontiff and sought investiture from him. Last, the states of the church itself—all that was left to it—came under the rule of some one of these princes, and the Pope was, to all intents, a prisoner in his palace. Such was the situation in the world of *al-Islām* during the early life of Abū Ḥaṣṣ when Mālik Shāh, the Seljuk, reigned, formally in virtue of investiture by the Khalifa, really by right of the sword. Yet the sovereignty of the Khalifa was not simply a legal fiction and a delusion, any more than it would have been so in the parallel I have sketched. Mālik Shāh found it well to have him as his supporter and recognizer, just as Napoleon I. had himself anointed Emperor by Pius VII. It strengthened his position with his subjects and especially with the theologians, an important body. Yet if it came to friction there could hardly be any question which side would have to give way, and thus the dignity of the Khalifate was in constant wane. Further, it suggested troublesome

questions as to how there could be two or more such Khalifas reigning at the same time or even a doubt of the absolute necessity of a Khalifa at all. Historical students felt inclined to go back and ask if there was not a time when the Khalifate, the successorship to Muḥammad in the highest sense, ceased and a mere Imāmate, leadership, took its place and some made such a break after the first four Khalifas and let the Imāms begin from that point. It was, thus, a time of transition, and it is difficult exactly to fix the view of Abū Ḥafṣ. We have seen that in his later days when the Seljuk empire went to pieces, the Khalifa, in the confusion was able to draw together some wrecks of his temporal power and thus again to take his stand before the world as a sovereign prince. How this affected Abū Ḥafṣ it may be hard to say. His position seems to have varied between that of a scholastic theologian who pays no attention to outside things as they really are, but develops his ideal theories and that of the statesman who sees the necessities of his country and time, and how they must be met. He makes a distinction between Khalifate and Imāmate, but the Imām must be of the tribe of Quraysh, the tribe of the Prophet. He is not only to be a spiritual prince but a ruler too, one who can *rule* in emphatic sense, hold the frontiers of *al-Islām* against the unbelievers and render justice to his people. The first clause cuts out Mālik Shāh who certainly was not of the blood of Quraysh and had recognized the Khalifa as his spiritual lord; the second cuts out the Khalifa, for he certainly did not hold the frontiers nor did he render justice; all that was in other hands. Probably, we have a case of a theologian spinning theories and affected in patches, as theologians sometimes are, by common sense.

So much then for the life and times of our author. It will be necessary for me now to go back to sketch briefly the history of the development of the theology of *al-Islām* from the time of Muḥammad to the point where it attained its final form at the hands of al-Ghazzālī—called by all true believers the Defender of the Faith.

With the death of Muḥammad in the year 11 of the Hijra (A. D. 632), the community of *al-Islām* stood face to face with two great questions. Of the existence of the one they were con-

scious, at least in its immediate form ; the other lay still in the future. The necessity was upon them to choose a leader to take the place of the Prophet of God and thus to fix for all time what was to be the form of the Muslim state. Certainly they had little conception of what was involved in the great precedent they were about to establish, but nevertheless we have here, in this first elective council, the beginning of all the confusions, rivalries, and uncertainties that were to limit and finally to destroy the succession of Commanders of the Faithful. Muḥammad had ruled as an absolute monarch—a prophet in his own right—and now he had died and made no sign who should take up his power. He had no son, and though there had been such a direct successor, it is not probable that it would have affected the ultimate result. The old free spirit of the Arabs was too strong, and as in the Ignorance<sup>2</sup> the tribes had chosen from time to time their chief, so it was now fixed that in *al-Islām* the leader was to be elected by the people. The choice fell upon Abū Bakr, one of the earliest of the Believers, and a father-in-law of Muḥammad. On his death in A. H. 13 (A. D. 634) there followed 'Umar, the second founder of *al-Islām* by his genius as a ruler and organizer and his self-devotion as a man. Through his generals Damascus and Jerusalem were taken, Persia crushed in the great battles of al-Qādisiyya and Nahāwand and Egypt conquered. He, too, had been an early believer, but upon his death in A. H. 24 (A. D. 644) there came the beginning of troubles in the election of 'Uthmān, of the Umayyad family. Abū Bakr and 'Umar had been old and faithful comrades of Muḥammad in his days of trial, but with this election the aristocratic party of Mecca, which had struggled against *al-Islām* so long as it was possible, came into power. 'Uthmān made himself hated by his nepotism and extravagance. He removed the governors of provinces who had suffered with the Prophet and fought in the Path of God, and put in their places his own relatives, late embracers of the Faith in the last days when Mecca was taken. In A. H. 35 (A. D. 655) he fell under

<sup>2</sup> The Time of Ignorance is the name given by the Arabs to their pre-Muslim condition. This is the common translation of the Arabic word but, probably, it indicated rather, at least to its first users, the time of Barbarism, as opposed to the civilizing influences of *al-Islām*. The contrast is not Ignorance and Knowledge but Barbarism and Civilization.

the daggers of conspirators, and the first of many civil wars began. In a hasty election 'Alī, the cousin and son-in-law of Muḥammad, was chosen successor. But he was strongly suspected of being art and part in the murder of 'Uthmān, and the family of Umayya had sworn revenge. The next five years were filled with alternate fightings and negotiations between 'Alī, Mu'āwiya, the governor of Syria and head of the Umayyads, 'Ā'isha, who had been the favorite wife of Muḥammad and now as a finished *intrigante* was the evil genius of *al-Islām*, and some of the old companions of Muḥammad.

Mu'āwiya won and founded the dynasty of the Umayyads, but with 'Alī ends the revered series of "the four just Khalifas," and begins the division of *al-Islām* into political sects. One of these was the Khawārij, who "went out" in the Jacobite sense—*Khawārij* means *goers out*—first against 'Alī because he, after being duly elected by the Muslim community, had submitted his claims to arbitration, and then against the following Khalifas as *unduly* elected and mere usurpers. They were in a sense the Independents of *al-Islām* and might be described with the Irishman of political anecdote as having been "agin everything." Among their different and conflicting sub-sects we find the most various views on the nature of the Imāmate or leadership. That the Imām must be of the tribe of the Prophet they generally rejected; any Muslim of good life could fill the post. Some went the length of denying the need of any Imām; the Muslim community was to be a perfect democracy and govern itself directly. Others admitted the right of a woman to be Imām, and if that division had triumphed it might now have been a possibility to solve the Eastern question by proclaiming the Empress of India as the Commander of the Faithful and the Khalifa of Muḥammad. But as things are the Queen of England must content herself with being the greatest of the Sultāns of *al-Islām* and having as good, or as bad, a claim to the Khalifate as the Sultān of Constantinople.

Another and more important sect was the Shī'a. The party of 'Alī and of his sons, the grandsons of Muḥammad, lived on in strange, half-underground fashion, as religious and political sects do in the East, occasionally coming to the surface and bursting



out in wild and, for long, useless rebellion. Persians mostly took up that cause and put into it a higher religious fervor and a different view of the state from that of the Arab party.<sup>3</sup> They rejected the idea of election by the community and asserted that the Imāmate was hereditary in the descendants of Muḥammad. This Shī'a sect—*Shī'a* itself means *sect*—spread quickly throughout all Persia, and by the time of the last Umayyad, Marwān II., A. H. 127–32 (A. D. 744–9) the whole empire was in rebellion. The Shī'ites themselves had no man strong enough to act as leader, and that part was taken by Abū-l-'Abbās, a descendant of al-'Abbās, an uncle of the Prophet, who used them for his own purposes, founded the dynasty of the 'Abbassides, and threw them over. But their cause, though lost for the time, was not lost forever. A conspiracy which is the strangest of all the romances of history grew up. A secret sect, the Ismā'ilites, spread itself through the Muslim world. Its tenets in the end were absolute atheism, almost the modern Nihilism, but its adherents were led to that gradually through advancing degrees, according to their pliability and fitness. Its political object was to overthrow the 'Abbassides and proclaim a descendant of 'Ali and Muḥammad as the legitimate Khalifa. The conspiracy lived through generations and at last accomplished its purpose. In the year 298 of the Hijra (A. D. 910) a real or pretended descendant of the Prophet was proclaimed in North Africa and shortly after Egypt fell into their hands and the Fāṭimite dynasty was founded which outlasted that of 'Abbas and only fell, after a period of utter decrepitude, at the hands of the great Salāḥ ad-Dīn, the Saladin of our annals. One of the Khalifas of this dynasty was the strange madman or genius, Ḥākim Bi'amrillāh, who vanished on the night of February 12, A. D. 1021, leaving a mystery that is unsolved to the present day. In many ways he reminds us curiously of the madness of the Julian house, and, in

<sup>3</sup> The history from this time on is practically that of a contest of Arab *versus* Persian. The two races could not mingle. In the pure Arab there is a Western dash of skeptical common sense that has kept him clear of many of the absurdities of the minor sects of *al-Islām*. Further, he is too individualistic to be a conspirator or to form a submissive and useful part in a solid system. The Persian, on the other hand, can throw himself into the wildest vagaries of mysticism and credulity. Even as a skeptic he is a skeptical mystic. He is a liar by nature—*pace* Herodotus—and fit for treasons and stratagems. It was the dream of the early 'Abbassides to unite the two races—hence the choice of Baghdad as a capital—but it failed.

truth, such a secret movement as that of which he was part, carried on through generations from father to son, could not but leave a trace on the brain. He is still worshiped by the Druses of Lebanon as an incarnation of the deity, and his return is expected to introduce the end of all things. Similarly throughout the Muslim world the appearance of the last Imām of the house of 'Alī is looked for. He is the twelfth in the series and has been kept for centuries in concealment, waiting his time. When he comes he will be the Mahdī—the *guided* of God—and will bring in His kingdom. So strangely does the theology of *al-Islām* mingle with the political crises of our own day.

This of the Fāṭimites<sup>4</sup> was the first and the great schism, and lasts, in a sense, to the present day. Modern Persia is formally Shī'ite and the Sultān of Constantinople professes to be Khalīfa by legacy from the last of the 'Abassides who, by favor of the Mamlūks, held spiritual court in Egypt when that country was conquered in A. D. 1517, by Sultān Selīm for the Ottoman Turks.

I need only mention one other development of this strange story of the fates of the successors of Muḥammad. One of the Umayyads escaped the ruin of his family and fled through North Africa to Spain. There, with marvelous genius and endurance, he founded a new Umayyad empire, and in A. H. 317 (A. D. 929) a prince of that house was proclaimed Khalīfa of Muḥammad and Commander of the Faithful. Thus, at one time there were three princes each professing to be the one leader of the Muslim world.

So much is absolutely necessary to any understanding of the great question of the Imāmship. The theoretical position that the Imām must be elected by the Muslim community was never formally abandoned except by the Shī'ites, who held to the legitimism of the line of the Prophet. But, as we have seen in dealing with Abū Ḥafṣ' life, that theoretical opinion was liable to much modification in practice. The Muslim community practically resolved itself into the people of the capital and, still farther, into the bodyguard of the dead Khalīfa and, in line with this, the doctrine developed that it was the duty of the people to recog-

<sup>4</sup> The Fāṭimites derived their name from Fāṭima, the daughter of Muḥammad and wife of 'Alī.

nize a *fait accompli* and to do homage to a successful usurper—until another more successful should appear. This was the end of the democracy of *al-Islām*.

Such was the first question that lay before the Muslim community at the death of Muḥammad; the other developed more slowly but had a shorter history. So long as Muḥammad lived and received infallible revelations in solution of all questions of faith or practice that might come up, it is obvious that no system of theology could be formed or even thought of. Again, in the first twenty or thirty years after his death, the Muslims were too much occupied in propagating their faith to think what that faith exactly was. Later, when the civil wars of 'Alī and Mu'āwiya forced men to reflection on the principles of their action, and when the Parsees and Christians who had found it advisable to embrace *al-Islām* began to exert an influence upon their new creed, the question of what the creed was could not fail to appear. It would begin through individuals forming opinions upon separate points and the body of believers accepting or rejecting these, according as it found them in accordance or not with their half-unconscious feeling of their faith. Naturally, the opinions which went to make theological history were those which were not accepted and became heresies. The first of these, though a heresy of an allowable kind held by some most orthodox men, was the view of the Murji'ites. It was a protest against the fatalism of Muslim life on its gloomy side. The earlier Muslims seem, to use more modern theological language, to have labored under a terrible consciousness of sin. They viewed the world as an utterly evil temptress, seducing men from heavenly things. Their lives were hedged about with sins, great and little, and each deserved the eternal wrath of God. The recollection of their latter end they kept ever before them, and the terrors that that would bring, for they felt that no amount of faith in God and his Prophet would save them in the judgment to come. To this the Murji'ites opposed a doctrine, Pauline in its conception. Faith, it was declared, saved and Faith only. If the sinner believed in God and his Prophet that was enough—he would not remain in the Fire. With this there seems to have grown up a further doctrine of the intercession of the Prophet for his people; that on the last

day he would be permitted of God to make intercession for as many as he might choose and would lead them into Paradise. It is curious to notice that an at least possible interpretation of the mysterious name *Murji'ites* is the *People of Hope*—the larger hope. This broader view came in with the Umayyad dynasty, which was in many ways a return to pre-Muslim times, and their easy enjoyment of the world and the things of the world. They rejected the yoke of Muḥammad in all but form and name. Some, even, have traced in it the influence of John of Damascus, the last great doctor of the Greek church.

Later, there seems to have arisen the question that, at one time or another, confronts every thinking being, the question of free will. The Muslim church of Muḥammad's later years and of the early times after his death was strongly and absolutely predestinarian. But with the latter part of the first century a party arose—the Qadarites—which claimed for man a determining power in his own actions. Both sides could find support in the Qur'ān, for Muḥammad had been no theologian of the schools, had held no consciously explicit doctrine upon the subject, having been an opportunist in this as in everything and, at different times in his career, had leaned to different views. Thus, the Qadarites could hold as literally by the Qur'ān as their opponents. But soon the questioning spirit went further—probably, now by the help of outside influence, and the Attributes of God, the Creation and Preservation of the World, the Nature of Revelation, and the doctrine of the Last Things, all came to be discussed with freedom and keenness. To find any parallel we must go back to our fathers' palmy days of dogmatic theology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for to us, degenerate sons, the debates of the Muslim divines will probably suggest first, these ironical questions submitted by Lamb to Coleridge: Whether the celestial intelligences could sneer? and Whether the archangel Uriel could knowingly affirm an untruth and whether, if he could, he would? The last was actually debated at great length as applied in God, and one philosopher, in the extent of his philosophy, went so far as to say that God could sin and lie but then He would be a sinful and lying God.

Into these refinements we cannot enter at any length but some

must be touched, and it should be noticed, first, that with the widening of the questions discussed, though probably also for other reasons, the term Qadarites went out of use and the more general name Mu'tazilites (Seceders) was adopted, and came to be applied, in the end, to all heretics.

First, then, as to the attributes of God. The question was raised whether such and such qualities could be ascribed to Him. Could He be said to will anything, since He must know beforehand what would happen? So the Mu'tazilites argued, and the figure of God was gradually stripped of all qualities till it was left a bare personality, undescribed and undescribable. But this meant either going in the teeth of the Qur'an or explaining away its utterances. Both were difficult, and the philosophies waxed fast and furious. Again, if we describe God as willing, as knowing, as seeing, and so on, do we not make of the one God many gods, and ourselves polytheists? If these qualities are additions to His Being they are separate gods. So they had to regard the qualities as being His Being and not in His Being, that is, as different sides or aspects of His Being. This view is not unlike some conceptions of the Christian Trinity, as an Arab theologian has noticed.

Then, as to the world, with Aristotle had come to them the idea of the world as law, an eternal construction, subsisting and developing on fixed principles. Hardly anything could be more opposed to Muḥammad's conception of God as the Sovereign of the Universe, on whose will all things hung, who had created the world, ruled it, and would destroy it. Law and Will were face to face. But ingenuity can do much, and these Arab dialecticians anticipated the resource of some Christian Darwinians. In the beginning God had created all things, but they only entered into existence gradually—*i. e.*, they *were*, but without the quality of existence which was added to them when they were to appear. Existence was thus regarded, not as the foundation of all being, but as a mere accident. Further, when they once existed, the quality was given them to develop on certain lines; they were put under the reign of law. The same conception was applied to actions. One action of necessity produces another, and thus all the working world is bound together into unity. But this power in an action of producing another is

given it by God, and so will is allowed for in the scheme. Finally, we need only notice in this connection that the question came up whether God by His nature was compelled to create the world thus or only did it through His Will.

Further, the question of man's free will, raised in earlier times by the Qadarites, was developed systematically. We have already seen how Muḥammad's own views had wavered. In many passages of the Qur'ān reward or punishment is assigned to actions of men; plainly, men must be responsible, and, therefore, free. But in other passages God is described equally emphatically as sealing up the hearts of men that they may not be able to choose the true path. The Mu'tazilites, as the heirs of the Qadarites, took up the side of freedom. Only if man was free could God's justice permit his punishment, and one of their favorite titles was "The People of Unity and Justice," the unity referring to their rejection of the divine qualities. Into this discussion it is unnecessary to enter; it is all to be found in Jonathan Edward's *Freedom of the Will*.

But perhaps the most important discussion of all centered round the doctrine of Scripture. The Scriptures of God, with His commands and decisions, are conceived of as written upon a tablet that stands ever in His presence, forming, in fact, a kind of concrete Eternal Decree. Of part of the contents of this tablet the Qur'ān is an exact copy. This seems to have been the view of Muḥammad himself, and, further, this Eternal Decree is not only to all eternity, but from all eternity, subsisting in the Being of God. The Qur'ān is, therefore, eternal, and, it follows from that, uncreated. When, then, Muḥammad and his infallible guidance were removed and the Muslim community were left to find their own way in the light of his book and the scattered fragments of his conversation that could be gathered up it was inevitable that their reverence for that book should reach the utmost limit. They, therefore, found no difficulty in its being eternal and uncreated, and it was only when that clashed with the Mu'tazilite view of the world and man that doubt and discussion arose. From Aristotle they had learned much that was not in the Qur'ān and they had learned much that was at plain issue with what was in the Qur'ān. An eternal, uncreated book was

above reason; yet they had begun to follow reason. But their most plausible and open basis of attack was that this view led to two divine, eternal beings—God and His Book. The history of the discussion can only be sketched in a few lines. In A. H. 212 (A. D. 827) the Khalifa, al-Ma'mūn, a very indifferent Muslim who favored Greek and scientific studies to the utmost of his power, published a decree that the Qur'ān was to be regarded as created, and that such should be the doctrine taught from all public pulpits. The next Khalifa followed al-Ma'mūn, as did also his successor, al-Wāthiq<sup>5</sup>, in the earlier years of his reign. But at the last he is reported to have had scruples, and in A. H. 237 (A. D. 851) al-Mutawakkil recalled al-Ma'mūn's decree and laid the Mu'tazilite doctrine under penalty. This was the end of the nearest approach that *al-Islām* has made to a rationalist system of theology.

The doctrine of the Last Things did not suffer so much at the hands of the Mu'tazilites. The statements of the Qur'ān were much too explicit and exact to be got rid of, yet the attempt was made to explain spiritually much that was expressed physically. One point, as to whether believers would actually see God in Paradise, they ventured to dispute, as its basis was only tradition from Muḥammad and not the direct word of God. Some of the more advanced spirits dealt more radically, but found small following. The eschatology of *al-Islām* stood firm.

Throughout all this discussion the Mu'tazilite party had met with little dialectic opposition. The orthodox Muslims were compelled to content themselves simply with statements of the true faith. They were not the equals of the Mu'tazilites in logical debate and learned to avoid it. Naturally, under such conditions, their cause went down, and despite the recall of al-Ma'mūn's decree it seemed as though the Mu'tazila would win along the whole line. But they were soon to meet with a grievous check and be overthrown with their own weapons. There was a young man, Abū-l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, of the best blood of the desert, who had been driven early in life to join them

<sup>5</sup> He is the Vathek of Beckford's brilliant romance. It is almost certain that some Oriental origin lies behind this book, though it has been very largely modified by Beckford. No Occidental would think of taking the comparatively obscure al-Wāthiq and making him the subject of a romance and, especially, giving him such a character. There the orthodox Muslim, probably a Turk, comes out.

through doubt of the orthodox position and its helpless traditionalism. Up to his fortieth year he remained with them, but with growing dissatisfaction. Intellectual criticism, when applied to *al-Islām*, tended not to make it more reasonable but simply to destroy it. After the Mu'tazilites had had their way no religion, really, was left. The Belief of Muḥammad had lived with all the life of his intensely personal God; this resultant thing was a few vague ideas. Al-Ash'arī turned from it, as the human race has always turned from similar attempts to make Christianity over again. He found in it the same lack of life and reality that has made Unitarianism the religion of the few. So he sought again the church of his fathers, but brought with him the system of Mu'tazilite dialectic. He went back to the Qur'ān and the traditions of Muḥammad, based his system upon acceptance of them as they stood, and used in their defense the weapon that had so long been used against them. The crass anthropomorphisms of the old faith he carefully avoided, its inconsistencies he harmonized, and seems to have gone upon the principle of taking the most conservative position that was in any way intellectually tenable. His success was rapid and complete. It was evident that the heart of the people was with this new attempt, for the Mu'tazila went down like a house of cards. His return was about A. H. 300 (A. D. 912) and he died some twenty years later with a curse of the heretics upon his lips.

Somewhat after al-Ash'arī, another teacher, an Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, did the same work in distant Samarqand. It is in the track of this last that an-Nasafī went, as we may see from some of the details of his "articles"—but that must be dealt with in the notes.

Yet the movement which the Mu'tazilites had led still survived though with changing methods and objects. The intellectual life could not be so quickly destroyed; its end lay some two centuries ahead. One result of their overthrow by al-Ash'arī was to hasten a development which had already begun in the separation between theology and philosophy. Al-Fārābī, the great Aristotelian at the court of Sayf ad-Dawla in Aleppo, perhaps the greatest of the Arab philosophers, takes little to do with direct theology but bends all his powers to understand his master's writings and to



reconcile them with, as he thought, Plato, in reality Plotinus. He died about twenty years after al-Ash'arī. Ibn Sīnā, for us Avicenna, the great physicist, who died scarcely a century later, seems to have been a man of piety and certainly submitted in all things to the dominant theological party. But, like some nowadays, he, with or against his conscience, kept water-tight partitions in his brain and did not permit his reading of the Qur'ān to meddle with his study of Galen.

Between the dates of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā appears to have fallen the life of a learned secret society, the *Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā* (*The Faithful or True Comrades*). We know very little of it, but it is supposed to have originated, directly or indirectly, under Mu'tazilite influence when that party found it dangerous to publish its views too openly. It is known to us through its great Encyclopædia, a collection of treatises *de omni scibili*, in which it is attempted to present a complete picture of all knowledge of man and the world. Their object seems to have been somewhat the same as that of the French *Encyclopédistes*, with the great difference that the Muslims were no unbelievers and had a strong dash of mysticism.

Yet why secrecy should have been necessary is not absolutely clear, for it was not till A. H. 408 (A. D. 1017) that the Mu'tazilites were forced to conform, and about the year 1000 A. D. there were held in Baghdād meetings of what can only be described as a Parliament of Religions. A pious Muslim traveler from Spain has left us a description of one of these meetings which he attended. He went, afterwards, to a second, but did not peril his soul by a third attempt. It seems to have been a free debate between Muslims of all sects, orthodox and heretical, Parsees and Atheists, Jews and Christians, unbelievers of every kind. Each party had a spokesman, and at the beginning of the proceedings the rule was laid down that no one might appeal to the sacred books of his creed but could only adduce arguments founded upon reason. From our traveler's narrative we recognize the horror with which the orthodox viewed this freedom of speech and thought, yet when such a thing was possible in Baghdād, religious liberty there must still have been tolerably broad.

But this did not last, could not last, in the nature of things. A speculative theology which is supported neither by popular approval, nor by ecclesiastical sanction, nor by state favor has not long to live. Yet the Mu'tazila ran a course of nearly 500 years and died hard. Az-Zamakhsharī, the great grammarian and Qur'ān commentator, who died A. H. 538 (A. D. 1143) may be called the last of the school, but he gave it a very modified adherence. Some thirty years before him, died al-Ghazzālī, the man who fixed the theology of *al-Islām* as it is to the present day. In this he may be compared to Thomas Aquinas, the systematizer through Aristotle of the theological system of the Church of Rome. For al-Ghazzālī was no mere theologian but like al-Ash-'arī drew his strength from his philosophical studies. Like Thomas Aquinas, too, he had a touch of mysticism and his theological structure is distinctly Sūfī<sup>6</sup> in character. So marked is this that in his own time he was regarded by many as a heretic, and his great work, *The Vivifying of the Sciences of the Faith*, was burned in orthodox Spain. But it won its way, for it was precisely that Sūfī tinge that was needed to save the Faith of *al-Islām* from scholastic decrepitude and to preserve it as a religion for the people. In the course of the long contest with the Mu'tazilites, it had run the risk of becoming a mere Body of Divinity.

I have now sketched very slightly an outline of the devel-

<sup>6</sup> The Sūfī is the Muḥammadan mystic. The derivation of the word is disputed. It is either from the Arabic Sūf wool or the Greek σοφός. As in all forms of mysticism, the essential idea is the striving to attain unity with God. But God may be conceived under many different degrees of personality, from Theism to absolute Pantheism, and so the Sūfī sects vary. Broadly, they may be divided into two, the Persian and the Arab. The Persian Sūfī calls himself a Muslim but he has really no part in the Faith of Muḥammad. His religious sources and ideas are Aryan, running back to Buddhism. The Arab Sūfī, on the other hand, holds fast the conception of the personality of God and softens the rigid austerity of orthodox dogmatics by the conception of religion being a life in God as well as a belief about him. Marvelous stories are told of these favored Saints who attain near to God—of the wonders that they work and the glories they enjoy. These Saints are called Walis, *those that are near to God*, and many books have been written upon them and their claims and their gifts. Such questions are discussed as to whether a Wali may know that he is a Wali; what is the difference between a Wali and a Prophet; which is higher; how we are to regard the wonders worked by Walis, and so on. Naturally, with this comes the idea that such men receive private and direct revelations—have an Inner Light of their own, and that they are raised above the precepts of the ordinary moral law. Against all this, orthodox Islām has had to fight and hold the path of the simple spiritual life in God. It does not deny the Walis and their wonders, but denies that they reach the rank of the Prophets, that their private revelations can supersede the revelation through Muḥammad, and that they are raised above the need of obeying the ordinary moral law. Persia is Sūfī through and through, and Sūfī influence is strong in the other countries of *al-Islām*.

opment of Muslim theology. As that development ceases with al-Ghazzālī, so, too, must my sketch. It is needless to point out the many parallels which it offers to the history of Christian thought. For the light which it throws upon that it is certainly worthy of more study than has ever been given to it. The following list of books may serve as a guide to such a study, but it need hardly be said that no really satisfactory work in this direction can be done without a knowledge of Arabic.

I. On the general history of Muḥammad and *al-Islām*, though with much also on the theological development:

Sir William Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, 4 vols. London, 1861.

Sir William Muir, *Annals of the Early Caliphate, from original Sources*. London, 1883.

A. Sprenger, *Des Leben und die Lehre Muhammeds*. Berlin, 1869.

Gustav Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen*, 3 vols. Mannheim, 1846-51.

August Müller, *Der Islam im Morgen- und Abendland*, 2 vols. Berlin, 1885-7.

II. On the theology of *al-Islām*:

Alfred von Kremer, *Culturgeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen*, 2 vols. Vienna, 1875-7.

Alfred von Kremer, *Geschichte der herrschenden Ideen des Islāms; Der Gottesbegriff, Die Prophetie und Staatsidee*. Leipzig, 1868.

Heinrich Steiner, *Die Mu'taziliten oder die Freidenker im Islām*. Leipzig, 1865.

Wilhelm Spitta, *Zur Geschichte Abu-'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari's*. Leipzig, 1876.

Ignaz Goldziher, *Die Schule der Zahiriten*. Leipzig, 1884.

Ignaz Goldziher, *Mohammedanische Studien*. Halle, 1889-90.

Auguste Schmölders, *Essai sur les écoles philosophiques chez les Arabes*. Paris, 1842.

Lucien Gautier, *La perle précieuse des Ghazālī; Traité d'eschatologie musulmane*. 1878.

E. Sell, *The Faith of Islam*. London, 1881.

George Sale, *The Koran translated*, with introduction and notes: many editions. [The Introduction is still valuable.]

The excellent little bibliography that accompanies the third edition of Socin's *Arabische Grammatik* may also be consulted with advantage.

ARTICLES OF BELIEF OF NAJM AD-DĪN ABŪ ḤAḤṢ  
AN-NASAḤĪ.*In the name of God, the merciful Compassionate One!*

The Shaykh, the Imām, Najm ad-Dīn Abū Ḥaḥṣ 'Umar ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad an-Nasafi (may God have mercy upon him!), said: "The People of Verity, contradicting the Sophists<sup>7</sup>, say that the real natures of things are validly established and that the predominant belief concerning them is correct. Further, that the sources of knowledge for mankind are three: the Senses, true Narration, and Reason. As for the Senses, they are five: Hearing, Sight, Smell, Taste, and Touch, and by each sense you are made acquainted with that to which it is assigned. True Narration, again, is of two kinds. The one is Narration handed down along a large number of lines of tradition; that is, it is established by the tongues of a number of people of whom we cannot imagine that they would agree in a lie. It compels a knowledge which is of necessity, such as the knowledge of departed kings in past times and of distant countries. And the second is Narration concerning the Apostle<sup>8</sup> aided by miracle, and it compels knowledge inferentially, and the knowledge established by it resembles the knowledge established by necessity in certainty and fixity. Then, as for Reason, it is a cause of knowledge also, and whatever is established through intuition is axiomatic, as the knowledge that every thing is greater than its part, and whatever is established by inference is derivative knowledge, as the existence of a fire from the appearance of smoke. And the Inner Light<sup>9</sup> with the People of Verity is not one of the causes of knowledge as to the soundness of a thing.

Further, the World in the totality of its parts is a created thing, in that it consists of Substances and Attributes. The substances are what

<sup>7</sup> The word in the original is certainly derived from the Greek σοφιστής but the context makes it clear that the Skeptical school is rather meant. This is borne out by what we find elsewhere. The Sophists, in the Arabic sense, denied that we could have any certain knowledge of the real nature of things, even that we could know whether things had an essentially real nature or not. This section seems to involve indirectly the position that the knowledge of God could be reached by reason without revelation. This was maintained by al-Māturīdī as opposed to al-Ash'ari; see p. 107.

<sup>8</sup> I translate by *Apostle* the Arabic word *Rasūl*. It means literally *messenger*, and was evidently used as a translation of the Syriac *Shēlīḥā*, itself a translation of ἀπόστολος. By *Prophet* I translate the Arabic *Nabī*, which is derived, directly or indirectly, from the Hebrew *Nabhi*. There have been very many Prophets sent by God with a verbal message, but the number of Apostles is limited. By Apostles books have been revealed, though these have now in great part been lost or corrupted. The only one that is uncorrupted and incorruptible is the Qur'ān, the book revealed through Muḥammad, the last and greatest of these Apostles. His principal predecessors in the Apostleship were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Muḥammad's revelation is therefore to be regarded as the last and crown of a long line. God has never left himself without a witness, and it has been the duty of each Apostle and Prophet to lead back his people to the primitive faith. This is the position of orthodox Islām and seems to have been that finally reached by Muḥammad. By what course of development Muḥammad reached it is an exceedingly interesting question, but one which cannot be entered upon here.

<sup>9</sup> See note 6, p. 109.

exist in themselves and are either compound, that is bodies, or not compounded, namely divisions that are not divided, that is essences. And the attributes are what do not exist in themselves but have a dependent existence in bodies or essences, such as colors, tastes, states, odors.

The Creator of the World is God Most High, the One, the Eternal, the Living, the Decreeing, the Knowing, the Hearing, the Seeing, the Willing. He is not an attribute, nor a body, nor an essence, nor a thing formed, nor a thing bounded, nor a thing numbered, nor a thing divided, nor a thing compounded, nor a thing limited, and He is not described by quiddity, nor by modality, and He does not exist in place or time, and there is nothing that resembles Him and nothing that is outwith His knowledge and power.<sup>10</sup> He has qualities from all eternity and to all eternity existing in His essence. They are not He nor are they other than He. They are Knowledge and Power and Life and Strength and Hearing and Seeing and Willing and Doing and Creating and Sustaining and Speech.<sup>11</sup> And He, whose Majesty is majestic, speaks with one Word. This Word is a quality from all eternity, not belonging to the genus of letters and sounds, a quality that is incompatible with coming to silence and that has no bane.<sup>12</sup> God Most High speaks with this Word, commanding and prohibiting and narrating. And the Qur'an is the uncreated word of God, written in our copies, preserved in our hearts, repeated by our tongues, heard by our ears, and it is not a transient state in this quality. And Creating is a quality of God Most High from all eternity, and it is the Creating of the world and of every one of its parts at the time of its becoming existent, and this quality of Creating is not created according to our opinion. And Willing is a quality of God Most High from all eternity existing in His essence.<sup>13</sup>

And that there is a Vision of God Most High is allowed by reason and certified by tradition. An indication passed from one hearer to another has come down with the affirmation that believers have a Vision of God Most High in Paradise and that He is seen, not in a place nor

<sup>10</sup> In this section it should be noticed how carefully the later orthodox theology steers its way between the anthropomorphic conceptions of early Islām and the denial of all God's qualities by the Mu'tazilites. This mediating attitude will be apparent in all that follows.

<sup>11</sup> That these active qualities of God are eternal was maintained by al-Māturīdī, but denied by al-Ash'ari.

<sup>12</sup> *I. e.*, it has nothing imperfect or hurtful. Using the same word the Arabs say: The bane of Tradition is lying and the bane of Learning is forgetfulness.

<sup>13</sup> Here it should be noticed that the eternity and uncreatedness of the Qur'an as read and repeated is maintained. But that does not mean that the written form with its paper, ink, etc., is uncreated. Farther, it is the Word of God itself, and not simply a state of that word, which comes and passes. As to Creation, some maintain that God created his quality of creating and then created, because otherwise He must have created from all eternity, but the world is not from all eternity, therefore He did not create from all eternity, therefore He had not the quality of creating from all eternity. Al-Ash'ari's proof of the existence of God's Word from all eternity is worth giving. God created with the word *Be*. But if that word was not from all eternity, it must have been created. Therefore another word, *Be*, was required and so we are led back in an infinite regress. I give these things as specimens of the dialectic side of Muslim theology.

after the manner of facing or the joining of glances or the placing of distances between him who sees and God Most High.<sup>14</sup>

And God Most High is the causer of all actions of His creatures, whether of unbelief or of belief, of obedience or of rebellion; all of them are by the will of God and His sentence and His conclusion and His decreeing.<sup>15</sup> And to His creatures belong free-will actions for which they are rewarded or punished, and the good in these is by the good pleasure of God and the vile in them is not by His good pleasure.<sup>16</sup> And the ability [to do the action] goes along with the action and is the essence of the power in which the action takes place, and this word "ability" means the soundness of the causes and instruments. And the validity of the imposition [of the task] is based upon this ability, and the creature has not imposed upon him a task that is not in his power.<sup>17</sup> And the pain which is found in one who is beaten as a consequence of being beaten by any man and the state of being broken in glass as a consequence of its being broken by any man, and such things, all that is caused by God Most High, and the creature has no part in its cause, and he who is slain, his death is caused by Him and the cause is one [only].<sup>18</sup>

And that which is forbidden is still Sustenance, and each one receives in full his own Sustenance, whether it consist of permitted or of forbidden things, and let no one imagine that a man shall not eat his Sustenance or that another than he shall eat his Sustenance.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> This has already been dealt with in the Introduction. It should be noticed that this doctrine is based upon tradition, though attempts have also been made to find support for it in direct words of the Qur'ān. Traditions are sayings of Muḥammad passed down by oral transmission from one hearer to another. In quoting a tradition the complete line of transmitters must be given, they must all be credible witnesses and have been in connection, each with each. Thus, theologian A will say: There related to me B; he said: There related to me C; he said: There related to me D. So it goes back to Z, who says: There said the Prophet of God. Muslims are justly proud of their system of traditions; there is nothing else like it in the world. But it is also beyond doubt that the greater number have been forged to suit purposes and occasions, and it is almost impossible to weed out the false from the true. At a very early date it became a crime in *al-Islām* to transmit a tradition that was to the discredit of the Prophet, and before long the same law extended its protection over his Companions, *i. e.*, his contemporaries who were in direct intercourse with him. The result may be imagined.

<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that there are some actions of free will and some foreordained. God decrees all actions but it is for the creature to "accept" to himself that he will perform the action. When he does so, then God gives him the power to perform the action and the suitable instruments. The old orthodoxy had said that a man could neither perform an action himself nor accept an action for himself. The Mu'tazilites asserted both, but the later orthodox school took up the doctrine of accepting.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Ash'ari took the position that "Will" as applied to God meant "Good Pleasure," and thus, that all actions were by God's Good Pleasure. The position here is that of al-Māturīdī.

<sup>17</sup> Again, a point of difference between al-Ash'arī and al-Māturīdī. Al-Ash'arī held that God could require an impossibility from man.

<sup>18</sup> This is a necessary consequence of the doctrine of "Accepting." The action itself, with all its consequences is God's, and man has nothing to do with it.

<sup>19</sup> This is sufficiently mysterious. The word translated sustenance here means all that God gives to man that he may live by it, food, clothing, shelter, etc. But there are certain foods and other things that are forbidden and some that are permitted. Can, then, this

And God leadeth astray whom He wills and guides aright whom He wills, and it is not incumbent upon God Most High to do that which may be best for the creature.<sup>20</sup>

The punishment of the grave for unbelievers and for some rebellious ones of the believers, and the bliss of the obedient in the grave and the questioning by Munkar and Nakir are established on the evidence of tradition. And the Quickening of the Dead is a Verity, and the Weighing is a Verity, and the Book is a Verity, and the Question is a Verity, and the Tank is a Verity, and the Bridge *aṣ-Sirāt* is a Verity, and the Garden is a Verity, and the Fire is a Verity, and they are both created, existing, continuing, they shall not pass away and their people shall not pass away.<sup>21</sup>

A great sin does not exclude the creature who believes from the Belief and does not make him an unbeliever,<sup>22</sup> and God does not forgive him who joins another with Himself, but He forgives anything beneath that to whom He wills, of small sins or of great. And there may be punishment for a small sin and pardon for a great one if it be not of the nature of considering lawful what is forbidden, for that is unbelief. And the intercession of the Apostle and the choosing on behalf of those who commit great sins is established by many and widespread narratives.<sup>23</sup>

word "sustenance" be applied to the forbidden things? The Mu'tazilites said that it could not and pointed to the command in the Qur'ān to give alms of "Sustenance" and to the fact that "Sustenance" is said to be given directly by God. But God could not give forbidden things nor command that they should be given in alms. The orthodox party, on the other hand, maintained that forbidden things must be "Sustenance" for you could be nourished, sustained by them. Otherwise you might eat pig and drink wine to any extent and they would not avail against hunger and thirst. Farther, a tradition of Muhammad was quoted in which the term was applied directly to forbidden things.

<sup>20</sup> The theologians of *al-Islām* do not hesitate at consequences. If this section is not true, then God must have ordained that all should believe, but He has not, and, therefore, this section is true.

<sup>21</sup> On the night after burial it is believed that the dead man is visited by the two angels named here who question him as to his faith. If his answers are satisfactory he is left to repose in peace and is granted a vision of what will be his place in Paradise after the Last Day. But if his answers are not satisfactory then the grave closes in upon him and crushes him and he lies in torture, seeing, also his appointed place in Hell. Souls and bodies are thus supposed to remain together in the grave. When the body turns to dust, the soul still remains connected with it. For this reason a Muslim burial-place is inviolable. Then at the Last Day they will all be quickened and raised, and their actions will be weighed, their record, which has been kept by the two angels assigned to each, read in the book, the question will be put, believers will drink of the Tank of Muhammad and pass into Paradise over the razor-edge bridge. There they will remain eternally. There was an heretical opinion that after all had passed into Paradise or Hell, God would destroy both and remain alone as He was before He created the universe.

<sup>22</sup> It was the view of the Khawārij (see p. 99) that a great sin excluded from belief.

<sup>23</sup> See p. 102. The text of the words, *and the choosing*, is uncertain. I have translated the reading of the collated MS. It may refer to the choice which Muhammad made when God granted him any one request he might make, according to the privilege of all Prophets. He asked leave to intercede for his people at the Last Day. Or it may refer to his choosing some of his people for intercessions. Cureton's MSS. read, *and of the excellent*, but I am doubtful whether in an-Nasafi's time the intercession of others besides Muhammad was believed in. In later times this doctrine was broadened until value was attached to the intercession of any theologian.

And those believers who commit great sins do not remain eternally in the Fire although they die without repentance.

Belief is assent to that which comes from God and abiding in it. Then as for Works, they are acts of obedience and gradually increase in themselves, but Belief does not increase and does not diminish. And Belief and *al-Islām* are one.<sup>24</sup> And whenever Assent and abiding in Assent are firmly established on the part of a creature, then it is allowable for him to say, I am a Believer in verity. But it is not seemly that he should say, I am a believer if God will.<sup>25</sup>

The happy one sometimes becomes miserable and the miserable one sometimes becomes happy and the changing is in happiness and misery and not in making happy and making miserable, for these are both qualities of God Most High and there is no changing in Him or in His qualities.

And in the sending of the Apostles is a restraint and God has sent Apostles of flesh unto flesh, with good tidings, warning and explaining to men the things of the world and of faith of which they have need. And He has aided them with miracles which contradict that which is usual. The first of the Prophets was Adam and the last is Muḥammad (Upon both of them be Peace!). And a statement of their number has been handed down in several traditions but the more fitting course is that there should be no limiting to a number in naming them and God Most High has said, Of them are those whom We have recited to thee and of them are those whom We have not recited to thee. And security is not given in the statement of number against there being entered among them some that are not of them or of there being excluded from them some that are of them. They all give intelligence concerning God Most High, are veracious and sincere, and the most excellent of the Prophets is Muḥammad (Upon him be Peace!).<sup>26</sup>

The Angels are servants of God and work according to His commands. They are not described as masculine or feminine.

And God has books which He has revealed to his Prophets and in them are His commands and His prohibitions and His promises.

The Night Journey of the Apostle of God (Upon whom be Blessing and Peace!), while awake, in the body, to Heaven, then to what place God Most High willed of the Exalted Regions, is a Verity.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> This is the view of al-Māturīdī. Al-Ash'arī held that *al-Islām*, *resignation to God*, was a broader term.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Ash'arī held the opposite.

<sup>26</sup> See note 8. It is singular that while in the Qur'ān Muḥammad repeatedly disclaims the power of working miracles and points out their uselessness as evidence because former prophets had worked them and had not been believed, yet in traditions that are true, if any oral tradition can be true, he is represented as claiming the power and using it. This raises a curious question of evidence.

<sup>27</sup> This journey of Muḥammad on Burāq to Jerusalem and then to heaven under the guidance of Gabriel is barely alluded to in the Qur'ān, but there are the fullest and most fantastic traditions about it. These seem to go back to Muḥammad on too many different lines of derivation to be false. If we can believe them, Muḥammad himself was the source of the stories. It is curious that the deeper the study of Muḥammad goes, it is the less to his advantage.



The Wonders of the Saints are a Verity. And a Wonder on the part of a Saint appears by way of a contradiction of the ordinary course of nature, such as passing over a great distance in a short time and the appearing of meat and drink and clothing at time of need, and walking upon the water and in the air, and the speech of stones and of beasts, and the warding off of an evil that is approaching, and the guarding him who is anxious from enemies and other things of the same kind. And such a thing is to be reckoned as an evidentiary miracle on behalf of the Apostle on the part of one of whose followers the wonder appears. For it is evident by it that he is a Saint and he could never be a Saint unless he were right in his religion and worship and in abiding by the message committed to his Apostle.<sup>28</sup>

The most excellent of mankind after the Prophets are Abū Bakr, the Very Veracious, then 'Umar, the Divider, then 'Uthmān he of the Two Lights, then 'Alī, he with whom God is well pleased (The good will of God be upon them!), and their Khalifates were in this order and the Khalifate extended to thirty years; then, thereafter, came kings and princes.<sup>29</sup>

The Muslims cannot do without a leader who shall occupy himself with the enforcing of their decisions, and in maintaining their boundaries, and guarding their frontiers, and equipping their armies, and receiving their alms, and putting down robberies and thieving and highwaymen, and maintaining the Friday services and the Festivals, and removing quarrels that fall between creatures, and receiving depositions and maintenance of rights, and marrying minors, male and female, and those who have no guardians, and dividing booty. And it is necessary that the leader should be visible, not hidden and expected to appear, and that he should be of the tribe of Quraysh and not of any other. And he is not assigned exclusively to the Sons of Hāshim nor to the children of 'Alī. And it is not a condition that he should be protected by God from sin nor that he should be the most excellent of the people of his time but it is a condition that he should be of those who have administrative ability, should be a good governor and be able to carry out decrees and to guard the boundaries of the territories of *al-Islām* and to protect the wronged against him who wrongs him. And he is not to be deposed from the leadership on account of immorality or tyranny.<sup>30</sup>

Prayer is allowable behind any one, whether pure or a sinner. And we give the salutation of Peace to the pure and to the sinner.<sup>31</sup> And we

<sup>28</sup> See note 6.

<sup>29</sup> See pp. 98 and 99.

<sup>30</sup> The conditions of the Imāmate have already been spoken of. He must be visible and not hidden and expected to appear as the Shi'ites look for the coming of the twelfth Imām. He must be of the tribe of the Prophet because there is a tradition of the Prophet to that effect. But he need not be of the line of Hāshim the great-grandfather of Muḥammad—this is directed against the claim of the 'Abbassides—nor of the children of 'Alī.

<sup>31</sup> This means that we are not to let the actions of any one influence us in considering his claim to be believed. Any one who takes part in prayer is to be taken for what he claims to be and any one who gives the salutation of a believer, must be saluted in return as a believer. The Khawārij refused to do this.

abstain from the mention of the Companions of the Prophet except with good.<sup>32</sup> And we bear witness that Paradise is for the ten to whom the Prophet (God bless him and give him Peace!), gave good tidings of Paradise.<sup>33</sup> And we approve passing the hand over the inner-shoes both at home and when on a journey.<sup>34</sup> And we do not regard *Nabīdh* as forbidden.<sup>35</sup> And the Saint does not reach the level of the Prophets. And the creature does not come to a point where commands and prohibitions and the details of the statutes in their outward sense fall away from him and the turning aside from them to the views which the People of the Inner Meaning assert, is Heresy and Unbelief.<sup>36</sup> And rejection of the statutes, and contempt for the law is Unbelief; and considering disobedience lawful is Unbelief; and despairing of help from God is Unbelief; and feeling secure against God is Unbelief; and believing a diviner in what he tells of the unseen is Unbelief. And what does not exist is known of God Most High just as what exists is known of Him . . . .<sup>37</sup> And through prayer for the dead and giving of alms for them they are profited since God Most High answers prayer and accomplishes needs. And what the Prophet has reported of the conditions of the Last Day, of the appearance of *ad-Dajjāl* and of the Beast of the Earth and *Yājūj* and *Mājūj* and the descent of 'Īsā from heaven and the rising of the sun in the west, that is Verity.<sup>38</sup> And the lesser theologians who developed details sometimes erred and sometimes hit the mark. And the Apostles of mankind are more excellent than the Apostles of the angels and the Apostles of the angels are more excellent than the generality of mankind and the generality of mankind of the true believers is more excellent than the generality of the angels.

It is completed by the favouring  
and aid of God.

<sup>32</sup> See note 14.

<sup>33</sup> These were ten of the earliest companions and adherents of Muḥammad to whom, it is recorded, he made a special promise of Paradise. Among them are some who after the murder of 'Uthmān rebelled against the Khalifa of the time and thus were regarded by some Muslims as unbelievers. The tradition assigning Paradise to them is suspiciously like a later eirenicon by which it was attempted to put out of sight all those unfortunate troubles and remember the ten only as early believers.

<sup>34</sup> The inner shoes are close fitting and made of soft leather. They answer much the purpose of socks with us. What is here permitted is that, instead of taking them off and washing the feet before prayer, under certain circumstances the hand may simply be passed over them. The matter was one much discussed by the followers of the four Imāms (see p. 94), but the general opinion is that expressed here.

<sup>35</sup> *Nabīdh* is water in which raisins have been macerated and steeped. If left to stand it ferments slightly and the question was whether it was to be regarded as wine, and therefore, forbidden. Most permitted it if it had not stood too long.

<sup>36</sup> See Note 6.

<sup>37</sup> There are four words here of which I can make nothing. Literally they read: *and (or although) it is not a thing or a man.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ad-Dajjāl*, the (emphatic) *Liar*, is the Muslim Antichrist; the Beast of the Earth is borrowed from the Apocalypse directly or indirectly; *Yājūj* and *Mājūj* are Gog and Magog; 'Īsā is, of course, Jesus.